THE KABUL TIMES DAILY

www.thekabultimes.com | twitter.com/thekabultimes | info@thekabultimes.com | facebook.com/thekabultimes

Founded in 1962 | Saratan 25-1404 Wednesday 16 July 2025 INo: 92-Vol: LXII

Kabul 32° Sunny | Kandahar 39° Sunny | Herat 35° Sunny | Jalalabad 36° Sunny | Mazar-e-Sharif 40° Sunny | Bamyan 20° Sunny

Supreme Leader visits Mirwais Regional Hospital, commends healthcare services

KABUL: Shaikh Mullah Hebatullah Akhundzada, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate, paid a visit to Mirwais Regional Hospital in Kandahar, where he praised the dedication of the medical staff and the quality of healthcare services, the Ministry of Public Health said in a statement on Tuesday.

During the visit, the Supreme Leader personally checked on patients' conditions, expressed hope for their swift recovery, and issued important instructions to hospital personnel to enhance the quality of care and service delivery.

He also engaged with patients' attendants to assess the overall performance of the hospital, who, in turn, expressed satisfaction with the current services.

As a gesture of support and compassion, the Supreme Leader distributed cash assistance to patients and healthcare staff, reaffirming the Islamic Emirate's commitment to public health and service.

The Kabul Times

UNAMA supports newly returned Afghan refugees, Otunbayeva

KABUL: Roza Otunbayeva, head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, in a meeting with Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate, said that UNAMA is committed to cooperating with newly returned Afghan refugees, according to a statement from Arg Tuesday.

Otunbayeva said that despite Afghanistan's economic challenges, the Afghan people warmly welcome returnees with open arms, which is truly commendable.

Meanwhile, Hanafi expressed his gratitude for the UN's continued humanitarian support and emphasized that addressing the complex and growing needs of returning migrants demands urgent and coordinated action from all relevant institutions.

Highlighting the Islamic Emirate's efforts to support returnees, he stated that new measures have been taken at the Islam Qala and Pul-e-Abrisham border crossings to provide the returnees with adequate food and drinking water, additional hangars and tents, according to the statement. Hanafi also called on international organizations to fulfil their responsibilities in supporting migrants and protecting their rights.

The Kabul Times

UNODC praises IEA's counter-narcotics efforts

Muttaqi described the IEA's anti-narcotics campaign as historic, highlighting the firm commitment of all national institutions and security forces to preventing Afghanistan and the region from once again falling victim to the drug scourge, according to the statement.

KABUL: Bo Mathiasen, Director of Operations at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in a meeting with Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the country's acting Foreign Minister, praised the Islamic Emirate's strong anti-narcotics efforts, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday.

The meeting focused on the Islamic Emirate's achievements in combating drug cultivation, production, trafficking, and treating drug addicts, the statement said.

Muttaqi described the IEA's anti-narcotics campaign as historic, highlighting the firm commitment of all national institutions and security forces to preventing Afghanistan and the region from once again falling victim to the drug scourge, according to the statement.

He also urged the international community to support Afghan farmers by providing alternative livelihoods, legal sources of income, and promoting livestock, agriculture, and small-scale production opportunities. Muttaqi voiced concern over the trafficking of narcotics into Afghanistan from outside, calling it a serious threat, and stressed the need for practical international cooperation to tackle the issue.

Meanwhile, Bo Mathiasen praised the Islamic Emirate's decisive actions against narcotics and positively assessed the IEA's counter-narcotics efforts. Both parties agreed that the fight against drugs must stay apolitical, rooted in humanitarian collaboration, and focused on achieving concrete results, the statement concluded.

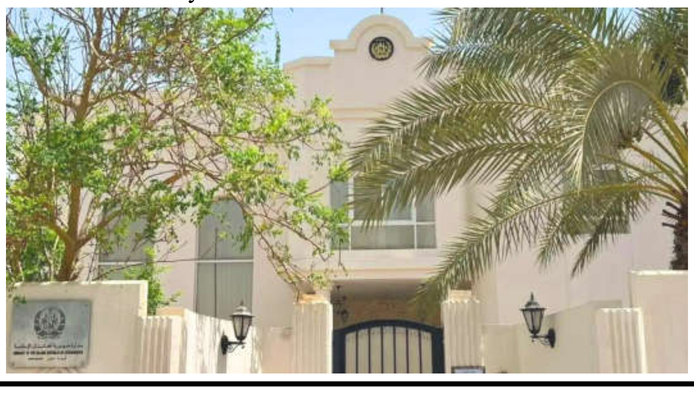
The Kabul Times

Shaheen meets German diplomat in Doha, discusses bilateral ties

DOHA: Mohammad Suhail Shaheen, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's ambassador to Qatar, met with Rolf-Dieter Dinehard, chargé d'affaires of the German Embassy to Afghanistan, to discuss the enhancement of bilateral relations, the embassy said in a statement on Tuesday.The two sides exchanged views on strengthening bilateral relations, particularly in the areas of diplomacy, consular affairs, and humanitarian cooperation, as well as addressing the urgent needs of Afghan returnees who have recently arrived from Iran and Pakistan, the statement said.

Shaheen appreciated Germany's humanitarian assistance and encouraged broader cooperation in education, health, and economic development. Meanwhile, Dinehard reaffirmed Germany's ongoing interest in engaging with Afghanistan on humanitarian grounds and highlighted the need for mechanisms to ensure effective delivery of aid and consular services.

The Kabul Times



Cabinet discusses land acquisition for Herat-Khawaf railway

KABUL: The 2nd meeting of the Cabinet of the Islamic Emirate was held with Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the Prime Minister, on the chair, discussing the land acquisition for the fourth phase of Herat-Khawaf Railway, Arg said in a statement Tuesday.

Discussing a range of important economic, social, and cultural matters, the meeting assigned a delegation led by the Ministry of Finance to assess the land acquisition process on-site and submit a comprehensive report to the Office of the Prime Minister for final decision, the statement said.

It was also decided to hold a meeting, chaired by Mawlavi Noorul Haq Anwar, Director General of the Administrative Office, with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Urban Water Supply Company, to plan the transfer of water from the newly constructed Shah Wa Aros Dam to nearby areas in Kabul, the statement added.

The meeting concluded with additional discussions on key national matters, followed by a prayer for the country's peace, stability, and prosperity.

The Kabul Times

Reading vital source of mental strength, peace, Minister Khairkhwa

KABUL: Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa, the acting Minister of Information and Culture, said on Tuesday that reading is a vital source of mental strength and peace.

Addressing the final day of the 'Kitab-e-Kabul' festival, Khairkhwa urged all segments of society to join hands in fostering intellectual growth and guiding future generations away from ignorance through the power of reading and knowledge, the ministry said in a statement.

Organized by the Public Libraries Directorate under the Deputy Ministry of Culture and Arts, with a strong message of promoting a national culture of reading across Afghanistan, the festival was attended by a number of the ministry's officials, UN representative Roza Otunbayeva, ambassadors, heads of national and international organizations, authors, and publishers, the statement said.

Mullah Khairkhwa also reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to establishing libraries, supporting writers and publishers, and encouraging youth and children to read, even with limited resources.

The ministry also announced plans to launch motivational reading programs in the provinces to elevate the importance of literacy nationwide, the statement added.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister Rashid highlighted that reading is the cornerstone of scientific progress and urged international organizations to invest in Afghanistan's cultural and educational sectors, particularly in building and equipping libraries in rural areas.

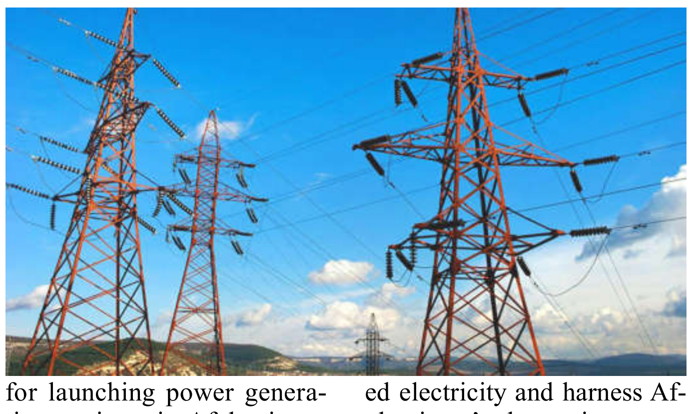
The Kabul Times

DABS signs MoU with Kyrgyz firm to boost power generation

As part of its strategic vision, DABS has prioritized attracting foreign investment and technical expertise to boost energy infrastructure and ensure a more reliable, self-sufficient power supply for both urban and rural areas.

KABUL: Da Afghan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Kyrgyz company to boost power generation in the country.

The MoU has been signed between Dr. Abdul Bari Omar, Chief Executive Officer of the company, and Alisher, a representative of Sadaf Energy, focusing on building new electricity generation infrastructure and offering technical training to local engineers, DABS said in a statement Tuesday.



Speaking at the signing ceremony, Dr. Omar reassured the investor that Afghanistan has now created a more conducive environment for energy-sector investment, adding, "There are reliable conditions for launching power generation projects in Afghanistan. We encourage international partners to invest with confidence." It should be said that Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) has been actively working to launch a series of power-generating projects across the country, aiming to reduce dependence on imported electricity and harness Afghanistan's domestic energy potential. As part of its strategic vision, DABS has prioritized attracting foreign investment and technical expertise to boost energy infrastructure and ensure a more reliable, self-sufficient power supply for both urban and rural areas.

The Kabul Times

International Daily
WWW.TheKabulTimes.com

Uzair Baryalay, Director of Govt. Dailies
Email: Atvaishan@gmail.com
Editor-in-Chief, Nik Mohammad Nikmal
Email: Nikmal@TheKabulTimes.com
Mob: (+93)700 208 103
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Fathulbari Akhgar
Mob: (+93)748 076 223
Distribution: 0202312509-(+93)766044966)
Graphic designers: Baktash, Habibullah Aiman
Translators: Abdul Baqi Haqyar, Noor Ahmad and Hamid Jhwok
Cartoonist: Sayed Hassan Samedi
Address: 8th PD, Olympic Square, East of Chaman-e-Huzori, Kabul, Afghanistan

Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Afghanistan's economy; from instability to self-reliance

Afghanistan's economic path today mirrors a journey from uncertainty toward promising opportunity, a transition shaped by a turbulent past but increasingly steered by domestic reforms, self-reliance, and resilience. Despite years of instability, the country now stands at a pivotal juncture, where focused action and national commitment can transform past economic challenges into long-term, sustainable development.

With emerging efforts in infrastructure, trade, agriculture, and mining, Afghanistan is gradually shifting from dependence to productivity. While challenges remain, the spirit of rebuilding is evident, and the current moment offers a critical chance to convert hope into tangible progress.

Fortunately, after the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, lots of efforts have been made to stabilize and stimulate the economy. Despite facing international sanctions and a lack of formal recognition, the IEA has prioritized economic self-sufficiency by investing in agriculture, infrastructure, trade corridors, and natural resources. Major initiatives like the Qosh Tepa Canal aim to transform dry land into fertile agricultural zones, enhancing food security and reducing dependency on imports.

Recent years have seen measurable gains in agriculture, construction, trade, and the mining sector. These are no small feats for a nation emerging from decades of conflict and international isolation. The cultivation of wheat and fruit, the revival of carpet exports, and the rise in domestic manufacturing signal a growing sense of economic self-reliance.

Progress in Afghanistan's economy is steadily advancing, marked by significant achievements that lay a strong foundation for future growth. The government's focus on developing key infrastructure projects, such as roads, irrigation canals, and energy supply, is gradually transforming the economic landscape and enhancing connectivity within the country and with neighboring regions. Expansion in sectors like agriculture, mining, and local manufacturing is creating new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, empowering communities across provinces.

The financial sector, while still evolving, is showing promising signs of development, with efforts underway to improve banking services, facilitate domestic transactions, and encourage the growth of small and medium enterprises. These initiatives contribute to building a more inclusive and dynamic economy capable of sustaining long-term growth.

The country's rich natural resources, including precious minerals and fertile lands, are attracting increased attention from regional partners, opening doors for strategic trade partnerships and investment. The government's commitment to creating a favorable business environment, including tax incentives for local industries and streamlined regulatory processes, further boosts investor confidence.

Also, humanitarian aid continues to complement domestic efforts by supporting social services and development programs, ensuring that economic progress translates into improved living standards for all citizens. With sustained focus on innovation, education, and capacity-building, Afghanistan's economy is poised to capitalize on its immense potential, ushering in a new era of prosperity and self-reliance.

Yet, the foundation for change is forming. Moves to increase trade with China, Russia, and regional neighbors could reduce dependence on foreign aid and promote regional integration. Tax relief policies in the publishing sector, small-scale industrial growth, and the return of skilled migrants all contribute to an internal dynamic of rebuilding.

Therefore, Afghanistan now needs smart investment in human development, infrastructure, energy, and education. Structural reform, increased transparency, and inclusive economic planning must go hand in hand with diplomatic re-engagement and responsible governance.

In this transitional phase, the choice is clear: either remain locked in a cycle of dependency and vulnerability or take bold steps toward a self-sufficient, opportunity-driven economy. Under the leadership of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), if this path is properly navigated, it could not only reshape the nation's economy but also redefine its long-term stability, prosperity, and national future.

Afghanistan maintains a stable, debt-free economy

Throughout history, nations have encountered defining moments when their economic and financial systems faltered, often leading to widespread instability. These events—known as economic crises—are far more than routine fluctuations; they represent deep, systemic shocks that test the resilience of nations. In today's interconnected world, understanding these crises is crucial not only for global powers but also for countries like Afghanistan as they work to rebuild and strengthen their economies under new leadership.

The term "crisis" suggests urgency and disruption—a breakdown of normalcy. In economic terms, it refers to a situation where financial systems collapse under pressure, overwhelming standard tools of management. Unlike temporary inflation or currency devaluation, a real crisis spreads across sectors such as banking, employment, and trade. Historic examples include the Great Depression of 1929 and the 2008 global financial crisis, which exposed vulnerabilities even in the most advanced economies.

To navigate and prevent such crises, it is essential to understand the evolution of money and global financial structures.

Early societies used barter before transitioning to metallic currencies like gold and silver.

These precious metals became the backbone of early economic trust. Later, paper money emerged, backed by gold, giving rise to the gold standard—a system that linked currencies to specific gold values, promoting financial discipline and international trust. But the inflexibility of this model made it unsuitable during times of war and economic shock, leading many countries to suspend gold convertibility to allow for recovery.

The 1944 Bretton Woods Agreement marked a major turning point. It created a post-war international financial order centered on the U.S. dollar, which was pegged to gold. Other currencies were linked to the dollar, providing global stability and enabling rapid reconstruction. It also led to the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. However, the dollar's dominance eventually created imbalances, and in 1971, the U.S. abandoned gold convertibility, ushering in the modern fiat currency era—where money holds value through government decree rather than tangible assets.

Since then, financial systems have been operating on floating exchange rates and digital banking, which, while flexible, are prone to inflation, speculation, and financial inequality.

The 2008 crisis demonstrated how flawed mortgage lending in one country can ripple through the global economy. In response, governments adopted emergency financial tools like quantitative easing and ultra-low interest rates, but critics argue that these measures often disproportionately benefit powerful economies, sidelining developing nations.

Against this backdrop of global financial volatility, Afghanistan under the Islamic Emirate (IEA) is pursuing a different and more cautious approach to economic stability. Despite facing international sanctions and limited access to global financial institutions, the IEA has taken prudent steps to prevent inflation, control currency volatility, and promote a self-reliant economy.

One of the most notable achievements has been the stabilization of the Afghan afghani (AFN), despite massive external pressures. While many neighboring countries have seen their currencies weaken due to dollar dependency and inflation, the IEA's monetary discipline—banning the use of foreign currencies in local markets, regulating exchange businesses, and encouraging the use of the national currency—has resulted in a rare case of currency stability in a volatile region.

Additionally, the IEA has avoided heavy reliance on external borrowing, thereby protecting Afghanistan from the kind of debt traps that have ensnared many developing nations.

Unlike some states that mortgaged their futures through IMF loans or dependency on volatile capital flows, Afghanistan's economy is being structured on cash-based, debt-averse policies.

In terms of trade, Afghanistan is increasing regional engagement by strengthening ties with neighboring countries through barter systems and localized trade agreements—echoing pre-modern methods of economic interaction that are more resilient in times of global financial distress.

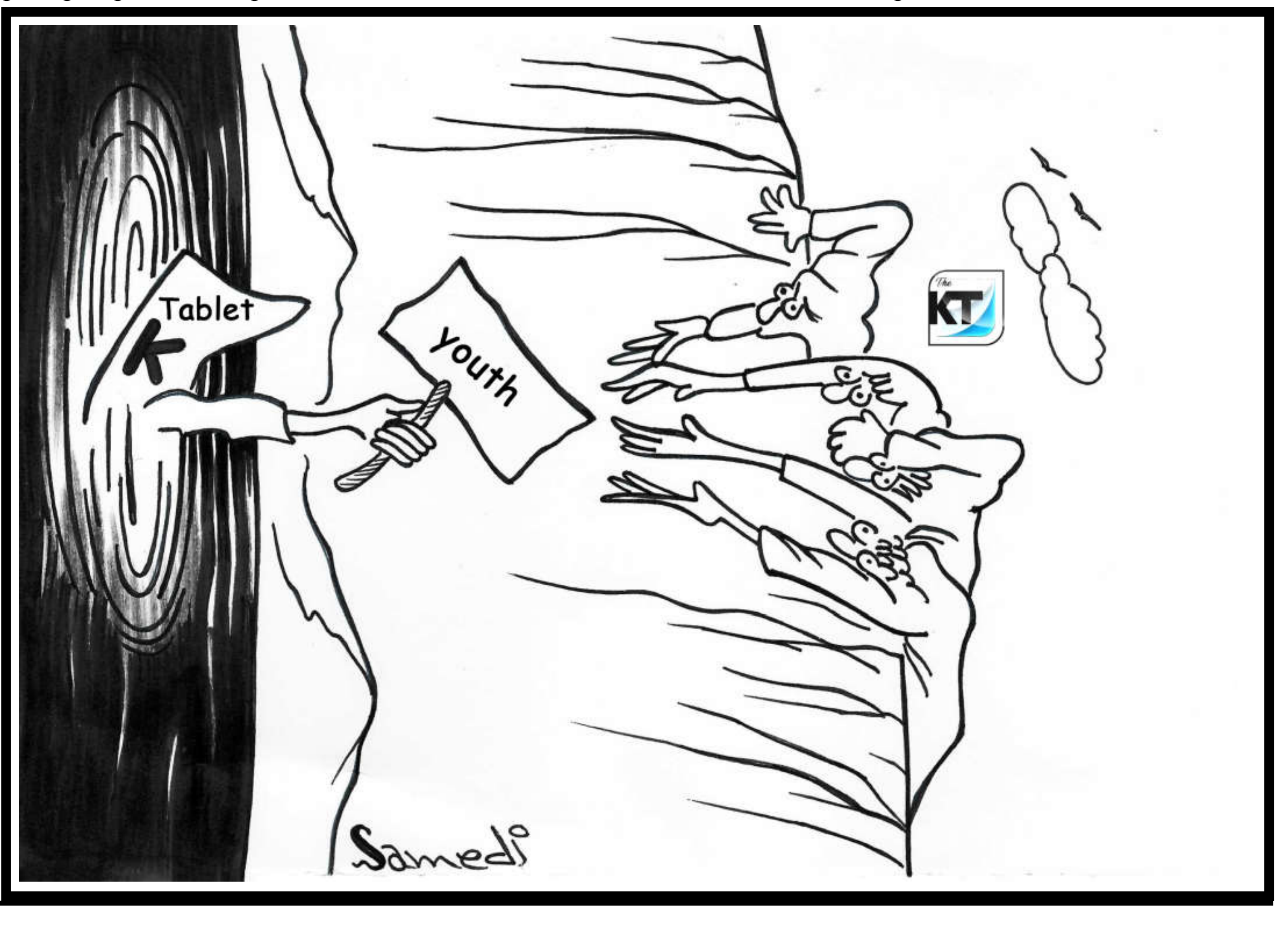
Moreover, the IEA has promoted anti-corruption efforts, fiscal transparency, and minimal government extravagance, thereby channeling public funds into essential services and development. These actions demonstrate an awareness of the failures of previous regimes that mismanaged international aid and created fragile financial foundations.

While the global financial system continues to wrestle with inflation, currency wars, and digital instability, Afghanistan under the IEA is positioning itself as a model of economic sovereignty rooted in Islamic finance, national currency preservation, and regional cooperation. Though challenges remain—especially with regard to international recognition and banking access—there is a growing realization that economic crises can sometimes offer opportunities for structural rethinking.

Rather than mimicking Western-style financial models that have led to repeated crises, Afghanistan is exploring alternative paths—focusing on stability, self-reliance, and moral governance.

These principles, drawn from both Islamic teachings and historical wisdom, could lay the groundwork for a sustainable Afghan economy, insulated from many of the vulnerabilities that plague the current global financial order.

Ghulam Reza Omidi



Russia Takes Lead in Recognizing Afghan Government, Marking New Era of Engagement

Recent developments in Afghanistan's diplomatic landscape have drawn significant attention, particularly Russia's assertive move toward recognizing the Islamic Emirate.

This stance marks a pivotal shift in Kabul's foreign policy and signals the potential beginning of a broader reintegration into the international community.

While most of the world remains cautious or noncommittal, Russia has taken a leading position by advocating formal engagement, disregarding Western sanctions and political pressure.

Russia's decision represents not just a diplomatic gesture but a calculated strategy with regional and geopolitical implications.

It offers Afghanistan a potential pathway out of the isolation that followed the political changes since 2021. Since then, Afghanistan has faced a severe diplomatic freeze, which has directly impacted its economy, banking system, investment climate, and the flow of humanitarian aid.

In this context, Moscow's initiative could serve as a first step toward rebuilding official relations with other regional and global powers.

Maria Zakharova, spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recently emphasized that any reversal of Moscow's position on recognizing the Islamic Emirate would be both illogical and counterproductive.

She praised Kabul's role in fighting drug trafficking, terrorism, and promoting regional stability, and further highlighted the historical, cultural, and political ties between Russia and Afghanistan.

Her remarks reflect a noticeable shift in the outlook of regional powers—from a position of hesitation and observation to one of increased engagement and pragmatism.

Russia's approach contrasts with that of many other countries, which continue to delay formal recognition due to fears of backlash from international institutions.

By moving ahead, Russia has positioned itself as a trailblazer in shaping a new regional order that includes Afghanistan.

This forward-leaning policy reflects both geopolitical priorities and a desire to expand influence in South and Central Asia.

Russia views its engagement with Kabul as a way to secure its southern borders, address regional security threats, and safeguard its interests amid shifting alliances.

Political recognition is not merely symbolic; it holds profound consequences for a country's economic and diplomatic standing.

For Afghanistan, gaining recognition is essential to establishing formal trade ties, rebuilding financial channels, and restoring access to international institutions. Russia's recognition may open the door for renewed financial and banking relations, especially with Russian institutions and their partners, an avenue that could help Afghanistan bypass Western-imposed financial restrictions. Additionally, official recognition could facilitate the formal export of Afghan goods—including carpets, dried fruits, gemstones, and minerals—to regional markets.

Afghanistan's economy, which relies heavily on informal and cross-border trade, stands to benefit from new legal frameworks for commerce and customs cooperation.

Security cooperation is another critical dimension of this emerging relationship.

Joint efforts with countries like Russia to combat terrorism, transnational crime, and drug trafficking can strengthen regional stability and reinforce mutual trust.

Intelligence-sharing and coordinated security policies could help mitigate cross-border threats and enhance Afghanistan's role as a responsible regional actor.

Furthermore, Russia's recognition may catalyze regional investment in Afghanistan's infrastructure, mining, and energy sectors.

Given Afghanistan's untapped natural resources and strategic location, foreign investment—especially from regional powers—could be a key driver of long-term economic development.

These sectors remain largely underdeveloped due to decades of instability, but renewed partnerships could unlock significant potential.

Nonetheless, this recognition comes with expectations.

The Islamic Emirate must demonstrate a clear commitment to international norms, including basic diplomatic protocols, human rights obligations, and constructive international engagement.

The global community is watching closely—not only to see how Kabul ensures security, but also how it handles sensitive domestic issues such as girls' education, women's rights, and civil liberties.

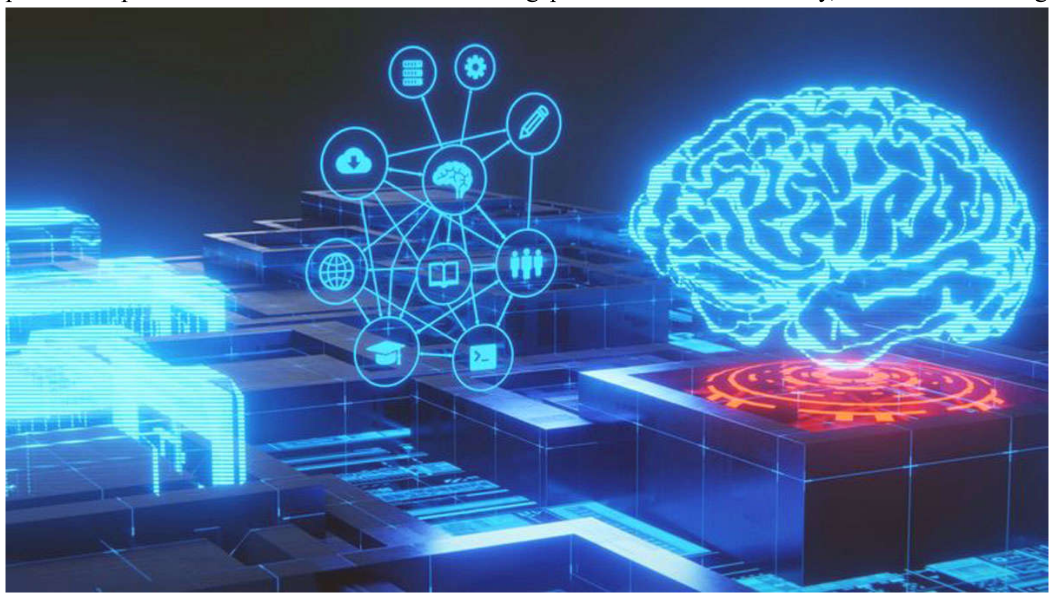
For international recognition to translate into sustainable cooperation, the Afghan government must present itself as a credible, rational, and cooperative actor.

See P4

Equipping youth with AI and digital skills; a crucial requirement for sustainable future

World Youth Skills Day is celebrated annually on July 15th.

The day is dedicated to highlighting the importance of equipping young people with the skills needed for employment, decent work, and entrepreneurship.



This year, the theme focuses on youth empowerment through AI and digital skills. Equipping youth with AI and digital skills is increasingly viewed as a crucial requirement for their empowerment and future success.

This is especially important in the context of the rapidly evolving digital landscape and the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on various aspects of life and work.

Education and training are crucial for empowering young people in today's world.

Providing access to quality education and relevant training equips youth with the skills and knowledge necessary to participate fully in society, contribute to the economy, and navigate the complexities of modern life.

For example, education and training directly translate to better job prospects and increased earning potential for young people.

They are better equipped to adapt to the demands of the labor market and pursue fulfilling careers.

In Islam, seeking knowledge is also considered an obligation for all Muslims, both male and female.

This obligation stems from the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

The pursuit of knowledge is seen as a means to understand and live by Islamic principles, as well as to contribute to society.

Education empowers individuals, especially youth, improves their status, and enables them to participate in the development of their communities.

It is seen as a means to break cycles of poverty and contribute to a more prosperous society.

Today, AI is transforming how we live, learn and work, but it also poses serious risks if not implemented equitably.

Therefore, AI skills should be received as AI skills are increasingly recognized as essential components of digital skills, particularly in the context of evolving technologies and the growing demand for AI-related expertise in various sectors. Digital literacy, which encompasses the ability to use technology effectively, is a prerequisite for developing AI literacy, enabling individuals to confidently navigate the digital world and understand the implications of AI.

See P4

Booming beekeeping business & a troubled honey market

In Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province, alongside agriculture, a number of farmers and families have turned to beekeeping over the past several years.

Their aim is both to benefit from natural resources and to meet their families' economic needs.

Although beekeeping is not a new profession, it has grown significantly in recent years.

Many individuals who were previously unemployed are now earning their livelihood through this occupation.

However, the influx of counterfeit honey from neighboring countries—often made from sugar, artificial sweeteners, or chemical compounds—has threatened the market for genuine honey.

These fake products are frequently mixed with pure honey and sold in local markets, endangering the credibility and viability of the authentic product.

Beekeepers report that the low prices of fake honey and the public's general inability to distinguish between real and artificial honey are severely damaging their businesses.

Many of them are calling on the government for assistance in market regulation and protection.

Ahmadullah, an experienced beekeeper from Arghandab district of Kandahar, says that the market for fake honey has recently grown, casting a shadow over the demand for natural honey.

He urges authorities to stop the sale of low-quality and harmful imported honey.

He says, "We produce pure, natural honey, but some individuals are selling a sugary mixture as honey.

This harms our income and should be prevented.

The fake honey being sold in the city is about 50% cheaper than real honey."

Rafiullah, another young man from Kandahar who keeps dozens of beehives in Arghandab district to support his family, says he enjoys beekeeping but is disheartened by the lack of market access for his natural honey, which he considers the biggest challenge to his business.

He adds, "My farm has about 250 hives. I've sold many of them—sometimes 50, 60, or even 70 at once. People have bought from me.

Beekeeping is great work, but nowadays our business has slowed down a lot because we don't have a market in Afghanistan. We produce honey, but there's no market to sell it."

Another beekeeper, Abdul Rahim Sherzai, also criticized the lack of markets and called on the acting government to help promote their products domestically and internationally.

He added that fake or sugar-based honey is imported from neighboring countries and then some traders in the province mix it with real honey. "Our challenges include high expenses, rent, and the upkeep of the beehives.

We want proper markets to be created for us.

There's still no proper honey market in Afghanistan.

The fake honey market has severely harmed our work and it must be controlled. People can't tell real honey from fake.

The fake honey is cheaper, so people buy it," he said.

On the other hand, Mohammad Hanif Haqmal, the spokesperson for Kandahar's Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, says that this year, honey production in the province is estimated to be double that of last year.

He also noted that efforts are underway to prevent the circulation of low-quality honey. He stated that an estimated 100,000 kilograms of honey will be produced in Kandahar this year, compared to 50,000 kilograms last year.

According to Haqmal, there are currently around 80 large and small beekeeping farms in Kandahar city and its districts, supporting dozens of families through honey production.

In addition to Kandahar, families in various other Afghan provinces are also increasingly engaged in beekeeping and the operation of honey farms.

Ehsanullah Wolasmal

Returning migrants bring capital and expertise, fueling Afghanistan's economic recovery

As Afghanistan faces a dire climate change, a growing wave of returning migrants is offering a beacon of hope for the country's economic revival.

Beyond the immediate humanitarian aspects of their return, these individuals are becoming instrumental in shaping the future of the Afghan economy, bringing with them financial capital, technical know-how, and entrepreneurial spirit accumulated over years of living and working abroad.

Over the past four years, hundreds of thousands of Afghans have returned from countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and other states.

While many returned involuntarily due to changing immigration policies or rising political pressure, others came back voluntarily, hoping to reintegrate and invest in their homeland.

Afghan officials have begun recognizing the significant economic potential these returnees carry, particularly in light of the country's goal to achieve self-reliance and reduce dependency on international aid.

According to the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, a considerable number of returnees bring with them not only savings but also skills in areas such as construction, farming, transport, tailoring, small-scale manufacturing, and services.

Many had worked in regulated environments, acquired modern techniques, or gained exposure to foreign markets.

These experiences are now being put to use in launching small businesses, rebuilding family farms, or investing in local markets, injecting much-needed vitality into Afghanistan's economy.

In response to this opportunity, the Islamic Emirate has initiated several measures to facilitate the returnees' integration.

These include the allocation of land for residential and commercial use, training programs to support their transition, and assistance in accessing credit for launching businesses. Special attention is being given to provinces with high returnee populations, where local authorities are working to match skills with market needs.

Returnees are also contributing to community development, sharing modern knowledge in farming, construction, and trade.

In some areas, they have introduced advanced irrigation methods, construction practices, or business models that are more efficient and sustainable than those traditionally used.

These innovations not only improve productivity but also set examples for others, particularly young Afghans who are eager to explore opportunities at home.

Moreover, their reintegration strengthens social structures and reduces the likelihood of future irregular migration. By proving that success is possible within Afghanistan, they serve as motivation for others to stay and invest in local potential. Some returnees are even collaborating with NGOs and development partners to train others or form cooperatives aimed at scaling up impact.

See P4

THE KABUL TIMES
DAILY
Saratan 25-1404 Wednesday 16 July 2025 INo: 92-Vol: LXII

The Kabul Times – the state-run newspaper–welcomes your advertisements. You can send your ADs to the daily to help you connect with your customers.
+93 700 330 184
Aryagulzar833@gmail.com

Currency	Amount		Rate
USD	01	AFN	68.95
GBP	01	AFN	92.66
INR	1000	AFN	803
PKR	1000	AFN	232
EUR	01	AFN	80.56
IRR	1000	AFN	0.79
AED	01	AFN	18.77

SPORTS

A three-week football tournament wraps up in Helmand

A three-week football tournament held in Garmser district of Helmand province concluded with Ariana Lucky Football Club claiming the championship title. The event was organized by the Helmand Provincial Football Federation, under the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, and featured the participation of ten teams from the region.

The final match was contested between Ariana Lucky and the Lakari Youth team. The game ended in a goalless draw during regular time, showcasing a balanced and highly competitive battle between the two sides. The winner had to be decided through a penalty shootout, where Ariana Lucky triumphed with a narrow 4-3 victory.

The tournament aimed to foster unity and sportsmanship among young athletes in the area. Over the course of three weeks, teams competed in a spirit of friendship and fair play, drawing local crowds and energizing the community with a shared love for football.

Officials praised the tournament for providing a platform for youth engagement and healthy competition. They emphasized the importance of such events in promoting peace, unity, and athletic development in Helmand, a province where sporting activities have gained renewed interest in recent years.

At the end of the event, the winning team was awarded a championship trophy, and commendations were given to players and organizers for their efforts.

The success of this local tournament reflects the growing enthusiasm for football and the potential of sports to unite and inspire communities in Afghanistan.

The Kabul Times

Mitchell Starc sets world record for fastest five-wicket haul

Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc has set a new world record for the fastest five-wicket haul in Test cricket, delivering a sensational performance against the West Indies in the third Test match. Starc claimed five wickets in just 15 deliveries during the final innings, etching his name in cricket history.

The remarkable bowling spell took place in the last innings of the match, where Starc showcased his world-class pace and precision. He finished the innings with six wickets for just nine runs, dismantling the West Indies batting line-up and dismissing the entire team for a mere 27 runs.

Starc's exceptional performance not only secured a dominant victory for Australia but also highlighted his continued impact in the longer format of the game. His ability to swing the ball at high speed and exploit even the slightest errors from the batters proved too much for the Caribbean side.

This achievement places Starc among the elite fast bowlers in cricket history, as he now holds the record for the quickest five-wicket haul in terms of balls bowled. The previous fastest five-for records were held by a select group of legendary bowlers, but Starc's 15-ball destruction redefines what is possible in Test cricket.

Cricket analysts and fans around the world have praised Starc's performance as one of the most devastating bowling spells in recent memory. His relentless attack, sharp lines, and aggressive intent ensured a swift and unforgettable collapse of the opposition. With this historic feat, Mitchell Starc has once again proven why he is considered one of the most lethal fast bowlers of his generation. His performance will be remembered as a defining moment in Test cricket, setting a new benchmark for bowling excellence. **The Kabul Times**

Balkh wins North Zone Bodybuilding & fitness championship

The 11th round of the North Zone Bodybuilding and Fitness Championship successfully concluded in Sar-e Pul province with athletes from Balkh province securing first place. The two-day event was organized by the provincial representative office of the Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation, in collaboration with the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports of Sar-e Pul. The competition took place at the provincial gymnasium.

The tournament brought together 80 athletes from four northern provinces—Balkh, Jowzjan, Sar-e Pol, and Faryab—competing in various bodybuilding and fitness categories. The event aimed to promote healthy lifestyles among youth and support the growth of bodybuilding and fitness in Sar-e Pul and the broader northern region.

After a series of intense competitions, the athletes from Balkh province emerged as the overall champions. Faryab secured the second place, while Sar-e Pul finished in third position.

Officials praised the event for providing a positive and structured environment for young people to engage in physical activity and athletic development. They also emphasized the importance of promoting sports like bodybuilding and fitness across Afghanistan's provinces, particularly as a means of encouraging discipline, health, and unity among the youth. Participants and coaches expressed appreciation for the hospitality and organization of the event and called for more such regional competitions in the future to further develop the sport. The success of this championship reflects the growing enthusiasm for bodybuilding and fitness across northern Afghanistan and the potential for athletic excellence in the region. **The Kabul Times**

Commission: 600,000 Afghans deported from Iran within a month

The Islamic Emirate is paying serious attention to this issue, and based on the order of the Leader of the Islamic Emirate and directives from the Prime Minister's Office, various government bodies and ministers are actively engaged in addressing this matter."

KABUL: The High Commission for Addressing Migrants' Issues said in a statement Tuesday that 600,000 Afghans have returned from Iran to Afghanistan in the past month.

The commission's spokesman, Ahmadullah Wasiq, said that necessary measures have been taken to address the challenges faced by returnees. Wasiq stated: "In the past month, 600,000 people have returned from Iran to Afghanistan, having been forcibly deported by Iranian authorities.

The Islamic Emirate is paying serious attention to this issue, and based on the order of the Leader of the Islamic Emirate and directives from the Prime Minister's Office, various government bodies and ministers are actively engaged in addressing this matter." Previously, the High Commission had announced that a range of essential services is being provided to returnees, including registration, distribution of tents and temporary shelters, food supplies, SIM cards, cash assistance of 2,000 Afghanis per individual, and free transportation to their provinces of origin.

The Kabul Times

Russia Takes Lead in Recognizing Afghan Government...

From P3

It must also adopt a balanced foreign policy based on good neighborliness, non-confrontation, and mutual respect.

Stability in Afghanistan is closely linked to its ability to maintain positive relations with regional countries such as Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and the Central Asian republics.

Russia's membership in influential organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) gives its actions considerable weight.

If Russia's position is echoed by other regional powers, a broader diplomatic consensus may emerge that challenges the Western-led approach to isolating Afghanistan.

This would not only legitimize Kabul's government regionally but also create new channels for international cooperation outside the Western framework.

It is also important to acknowledge that unilateral recognition—while symbolically powerful—is not a silver bullet. Afghanistan's path forward will require multidimensional reforms and sustained diplomatic efforts.

Nonetheless, Russia's bold move has disrupted the status quo and opened the possibility of a new chapter in Afghanistan's international relations.

By being the first global power to move beyond hesitation, Russia has sent a clear message: engagement, not isolation, is the path to stability.

This decision may appear at first glance as a routine diplomatic adjustment, but its implications are far-reaching.

It suggests the beginning of a shift away from exclusion and toward constructive interaction between Afghanistan and the global community.

Now, the responsibility lies with Kabul.

This historic opportunity demands strategic thinking, wise policymaking, and meaningful reforms.

If managed well, Afghanistan can gradually rebuild its international presence, foster mutual trust, and resume its role as an active member of the global community.

The world is closely watching the next steps—steps that could lead the nation toward peace, progress, and long-awaited stability.

Abu Ragheb Amani

Returning migrants bring capital and expertise, fueling...

From P3

However, challenges remain. Many returnees face hurdles such as lack of infrastructure, limited access to capital, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and insecurity in some areas.

Experts stress that the government and international organizations must work together to ensure these migrants are not just accommodated but actively empowered to participate in national recovery.

In the words of an official from the Economic Deputy Office, "Every returning migrant is a bridge between Afghanistan and the outside world. Their capital is not just money, it's knowledge, discipline, and a vision for progress."

If current efforts are expanded and sustained, the economic inclusion of returning migrants could significantly accelerate Afghanistan's path to recovery, transforming what has long been seen as a migration crisis into an opportunity for economic renewal and long-term stability.

This trend, if supported through coordinated policy and donor engagement, could mark a turning point for Afghanistan's economy by transforming migration from a burden into an asset for sustainable development.

Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), in close and continuous cooperation with both domestic and international aid agencies, intensify efforts to provide returning refugees with improved facilities, essential services, and long-term support.

This includes ensuring access to proper housing, clean drinking water, healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities. Such coordinated efforts will not only ease the reintegration process for returnees but also help them reestablish stable lives with dignity and security.

By addressing their urgent and long-term needs, the IEA and its partners can prevent further displacement, reduce poverty, and contribute meaningfully to national development and social cohesion.

Ensuring the welfare of returnees is a humanitarian duty and a critical investment in Afghanistan's future stability and prosperity.

Nesar Ahmad Tareq

Equipping youth with AI and digital skills; a crucial...

From P3

AI skills are becoming increasingly intertwined with digital skills, requiring individuals to adapt and acquire new competencies to thrive in the digital age.

By integrating AI into digital skills programs and fostering a culture of continuous learning, individuals can harness the power of AI to enhance their career prospects and contribute to a more innovative and equitable society.

As this year's theme focuses on youth empowerment through AI and digital skills, it is time to invest in education and training for country's youth as it brings us a bright future, a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable world. The Islamic Emirate should also provide all necessary facilities for them to empower themselves through AI and digital skills so that they can better contribute to a more prosperous society and drive the country towards development. On World Youth Skills Day, let's come together to recognize the power of young people as drivers of change and development, do all the best to equipp them with AI and digital skills so that they can participate in tackling today's challenges and shaping a more peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable future. **Mashal Noori**